

FORGIVE YOU

In the 2013 article “*How the brain heals emotional wounds: The functional neuroanatomy of forgiveness*”, researchers found, through the use of fMRI (functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging), a machine used for brain imaging, that there are significant “*real-time*” changes that occur when we choose to forgive an offender. The fMRI data demonstrated a shift in brain network connectivity during forgiveness practice compared with remaining in a state of unforgiveness. Learning to forgive yourself is not about forgetting. We may never be free of the actual memory of a painful event. However, we can be free from the pain and anger associated with memory—your physical brain changes and experiences “renewal” when you choose to forgive.

link to full article

- One of the most significant biblical examples of this truth is found in Isaiah's personal account in the sixth chapter of his prophetic writing.
- Isaiah gives a firsthand account of experiencing the manifested presence of God, in all His majesty, excellence, and splendor. However, after the glory filled the temple and the angels cried holy, the only thing Isaiah could do in that moment was agonize over his personal reality.
 - **Isaiah 6:5** And I said: “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;
 - To forgive ourselves, we need to take responsibility for where we are and feel remorse for what we've done. (Many of us are halting our own forgiveness because we're too prideful to actually acknowledge that we've done something wrong.)
 - Notice the response of the angels after Isaiah makes his personal confession.
 - **Isaiah 6:6** Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. **7** And he touched my mouth and said: “Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.”
 - We must personally submit to the process of divine restoration in our lives. (The best we can do for ourselves in this season is submit to the process.)

- Isaiah's response to the restoration reveals the "renewal" that the article speaks of, and it leaps off the pages of scripture.
- **Isaiah 6:8** And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me."
- When we truly embrace God's forgiveness, we will release the guilt and shame of our past and run boldly toward God's purpose.
 - May we all go from v.5 "**I am lost**" to v.8 "**Here I am!**"

Forgiveness Prayer

Lord God, I acknowledge that I have done wrong, and been in the wrong places with the wrong people. Help me to embrace your forgiveness and the right reality you have created for me, in Jesus' name, amen.